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25X1

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CONTENTS

Communist China: Renewal of public criticism of Peking officials indicates continuing dissension among top officials. (Page 3)

25X1

25X1

25X1

Approved For Release 2002/10/22 : CIA-RDP79T00975A009700250001-7

Next 2 Page(s) In Document Exempt

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Communist China: Although open conflict and violence in China has largely been curbed, the renewal of public criticism of officials in Peking indicates that dissension among Communist China's top leaders continues.

Two more vice premiers have joined agricultural specialist Tan Chen-lin as targets for criticism. They are Finance Minister Li Hsien-nien, and Li Fu-chun, who is in charge of state planning. Like Tan, both men are politburo members and Li Fu-chun is also on the standing committee, the politburo's powerful inner group. Neither of these men, however, is being attacked with the vehemence directed against Tan and both are being defended in other posters describing them as good students of Mao. There has been no recent defense of Tan.

These attacks conceivably could be directed obliquely at Premier Chou En-lai for whom all three men work. Chou, along with Madame Mao, defended them when they were criticized in January. Although Chou himself is not currently being publicly criticized, a Western correspondent in Peking reports posters are up defending him.

Chou, who on several occasions has taken the Red Guards to task for their excesses, may also be the indirect target of an editorial in Shanghai's Wen Hui Pao on 16 March. The editorial castigated those who said the guards were "overdoing it," and said flatly that anyone who criticized the guards for their relatively few mistakes was opposing the Cultural Revolution. This newspaper was in the vanguard of the Cultural Revolution last year.

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17 Mar 67

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